

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
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FM AMEMBASSY DACCA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8431
INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 1552

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, KN, BG
SUBJ: VISIT OF NORTH KOREAN VICE PRESIDENT

1. NORTH KOREAN VICE PRESIDENT KANG RYAND UK VISITED
BANGLADESH MARCH 8-12 ALONG WITH A FOUR MEMBER OFFICIAL
DELEGATION. HIS VISIT, FOR WHICH BD VICE PRESIDENT
SATTAR WAS OFFICIAL HOST, INCLUDED MANY OF THE USUAL
STOPS, E.G., THE RICE RESEARCH INSTITUTE, THE ADAMJEE JUTE
MILLS, AND A CALL ON PRESIDENT ZIAUR RAHMAN. SATTAR
GAVE KANG A DINNER, BUT OTHERWISE THE SOCIAL AMENITIES
WERE AT A MINIMUM AND PRESS COVERAGE WAS REMARKABLY SLIGHT.

2. NO COMMUNIQUE WAS ISSUED FOLLOWING THE TRIP. KANG'S
AIRPORT STATEMENT ON HIS DEPARTURE FOR NEW DELHI
CONTAINED LITTLE OF SIGNIFICANCE. HE SAID THAT
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BANGLADESH APPRECIATED THE PROGRESS MADE BY NORTH KOREA
"IN ALL POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL FIELDS UNDER THE
WISE LEADERSHIP OF PRESIDENT KIM IL SUNG" AND NOTED
THAT HE HAD SEEN THE PROGRESS MADE IN BANGLADESH UNDER
THE "DYNAMIC LEADERSHIP OF PRESIDENT ZIAUR RAHMAN". KANG
ALSO SAID THAT NORTH KOREA SUPPORTED BANGLADESH'S NON-
ALIGNED FOREIGN POLICY AND ITS DESIRE TO MAINTAIN PEACE

AND STABILITY IN ASIA.

3. SATTAR'S ADDRESS AT HIS DINNER ON MARCH 8 CONTAINED SIMILAR PLATTITUDES EXCEPT THAT THIS TIME IT WAS KIM WHOSE LEADERSHIP WAS "DYNAMIC", WHILE KANG IS REPORTED TO HAVE CALLED ZIA'S "CORRECT". SATTAR MENTIONED, RATHER INCONGROUSLY, THE "HISTORIC TIES" BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES IN THE CONTEXT OF THEIR MUTUAL ASIAN PAST. HE ALSO MADE SOME REMARKS ABOUT THE ECONOMIC PROGRESS OF NORTH KOREA AND THESE WERE RECIPROCATED. SO FAR AS WE ARE AWARE THERE WAS NO PUBLIC MENTION OF THE UNITED STATES. IN ANY EVENT NONE WAS REPORTED IN THE PRESS.

4. THE VISIT ALSO GAVE AN OCCASION FOR A REVIEW OF THE BANGLADESH-NORTH KOREA BARTER AGREEMENT WHICH WAS CONCLUDED IN PYONGYANG IN 1977. THE NORTH KOREAN PARTICIPANT IN THE DISCUSSIONS WAS RYN IN GUAN. BOTH SIDES SAID THEY WERE SATISFIED WITH THE PROGRESS UNDER THE ARRANGEMENT.

5. KANG'S VISIT COINCIDED WITH THE FINAL PORTION OF A LONGER TOUR BY A NORTH KOREAN CULTURAL DELEGATION WHICH HAS PERFORMED TO REASONABLY GOOD AUDIENCES IN DACCA AND ELSEWHERE. IT CONSISTS PRIMARILY OF ACROBATS.

6. COMMENT: THE VISIT SEEMS BEST DESCRIBED AS ROUTINE. THE PRESENT BANGLADESH REGIME IS WORKING CLOSELY WITH THE CONFIDENTIAL

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SOUTH KOREAN GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE GROUPS IN A NUMBER OF DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT PROJECTS. IT NO DOUBT FEELS THAT OVER ENTHUSIASM TOWARD NORTH KOREA IS NOT WORTH THE RISK OF LOSING ITS MORE VALUABLE CONTACTS WITH THE SOUTH. WE WILL TRY TO FIND OUT WHAT, IF ANY, PITCH KANG MADE FOR SUPPORT ON ANY RENEWAL IN THE UN OR NAM OF NORTH KOREA'S PROPOSALS, ALTHOUGH BANGLADESH IN THE PAST HAS BEEN AMONG THE MODERATES ON THIS ISSUE.
BERGESEN

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